

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SW, CU

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER PALME'S VISIT TO CUBA

1. SUMMARY. SWEDISH PRESS HAS GIVEN HEAVY COVERAGE TO PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO CUBA JUNE 28-JULY 1. IT WAS FIRST VISIT EVER BY A SWEDISH HEAD OF GOVERNMENT TO CUBA AND IS DESCRIBED AS FIRST VISIT TO CASTRO CUBA BY A WEST EUROPEAN HEAD OF GOVERNMENT. TV FILMS SHOWN JULY 2 FEATURED ENTHUSIASTIC MASSES, POMP AND CEREMONY AT CHIEF OF STATELEVEL, CASTRO IN USUAL ARMY GREEN NEXT TO PALME GARBED IN SHORT-SLEEVED WHITE SHIRT, WEARING BLUE SCARF PARTISAN-STYLE. OPPOSITION PRESS HAS REACTED BITINGLY TO PALME'S UNSTINTING PRAISE FOR CUBA AND ITS FREEDOMS, AS THOUGH CUBA HAD NO SIMILARITIES WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA WHERE PALME HAS DENOUNCED "CREATURES OF DICTATORSHIP." REACTING ON HIS RETURN TO EVIDENCE OF POPULAR MISGIVINGS ABOUT HIS INDULGENCE FOR THE DICTATOR OF A ONE-PARTY

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STATE, PALME'S FIRST DEFENSE HAS BEEN TO TELL REPORTERS THAT

ALLOWANCES MUST BE MADE FOR A COUNTRY "INVOLVED IN AN ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT CONFLICT WITH A GIGANTIC NEIGHBOR." END SUMMARY

2. PALME'S SANTIAGO SPEECH. ACCORDING TO PRESS, PALME TREATED CROWD OF SOME 100,000 CUBANS AT SANTIAGO JUNE 29 TO WORDS OF PRAISE FOR CUBAN REVOLUTION AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS. PREDICTING UNIVERSAL DEFEAT OF "FASIST REGIMES," PALME REPORTEDLY PROCLAIMED THAT NO TERROR, TORTURE, OR REPRESSION COULD BLOCK "FORCES OF FREEDOM" EXEMPLIFIED "YESTERDAY IN CUBA, TODAY IN VIETNAM AND PORTUGAL, TOMORROW IN CHILE."

3. ACKNOWLEDGED DIFFERENCES. PALME REPORTEDLY VAUNTED MERITS OF PARTICIPATORY EGALITARIAN SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY, BUT IN EQUIVOCAL CONTEXT THAT COULD BE INTERPRETED EITHER AS REFLECTING ASSUMPTION THAT ACCEPTABLE CUBAN VERSION ALREADY EXISTS, OR AS IMPLYING PALME HAD LESSON TO OFFER CUBA. PRESS ACCOUNTS INDICATE CASTRO AND PALME ACKNOWLEDGED IN RESPECTIVE PRESS CONFERENCE, IF NOT IN SPEECHES, THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CUBAN AND SWEDISH SYSTEMS.

4. CASTRO RE US. PRESS ACCOUNTS JULY 2 INDICATE CASTRO HAILED GOS FOR ITS PAST ANTI-US PROTESTS. TALKING WITH SWEDISH CORRESPONDENTS, CASTRO IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT US CERTAINLY VIEWS WITH GREAT CONCERN COOPERATION BETWEEN SWEDEN AND CUBA, EVEN WHEN THIS IS OFTEN TO SWEDEN'S ADVANTAGE. PRESS JULY 3 REPORTS CASTRO'S COMMENTS AT SWEDISH EMBASSY RECEPTION THAT HE NO LONGER FEELS MENACED BY THREAT OF CIA ASSASSINATION.

5. SWEDISH DILEMMA OVER PROFIT MAKING IN THIRD WORLD. PALME REPEATED IN CUBA HIS SUPPORT FOR MEXICAN DECLARATION AND "NEW ECONOMIC WORLD ORDER." IN ANSWER TO SWEDISH CORRESPONDENTS WHO ASKED WHETHER HIS PURPOSE IN LATIN AMERICA WAS MAINLY TO MAKE MONEY FOR SWEDEN, AND HOW A RICH CAPITALIST COUNTRY LIKE SWEDEN COULD DEVELOP "LOYAL" ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PALME REPORTEDLY SAID: "WE ARE NOT TRYING TO FORCE UPON THESE COUNTRIES EVERYTHING THAT SWEDEN WOULD LIKE TO SELL; WE ALWAYS ASK THE QUESTION WHAT DO THESE COUNTRIES REALLY NEED, AND IF WE CAN GET INTO AREAS SUPPORTING THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WE SHOULD. IF MUTUAL AGREEMENTS THEN PROFIT THE SWEDISH ECONOMY AND EXPORT INDUSTRY, THIS IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONLY AN ADDED ADVANTAGE THAT NEEDS NO JUSTIFYING." AT SAME TIME, ANSWERING INSINUATIONS HE SHOULD STAY AT HOME CONTROLLING SWEDISH INFLATION AND SEEKING SOLUTIONS FOR TROUBLED SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY, PALME AND DELEGATION MEMBERS SAID THEY WERE PROMOTING SWEDISH SHIPBUILDING, IRON AND STEEL, PHARMACEUTICALS, AND FOODSTUFF INDUSTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA.

6. CUBAN LINE ON VIOLENCE. CORRESPONDENTS SOUGHT TO EXTRACT

KIND WORDS FROM CASTRO ABOUT MEXICAN AND VENEZUELAN REFORMIST COURSES, BUT INSTEAD HE OFFERED WARM REFERENCES TO "PROGRESSIVE" MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN PERU AND PANAMA. CASTRO IMPLIED ALLENDE'S EXPERIENCE SHOWED WEAKNESS OF SEEKING POWER BY "BOURGEOIS MEANS," BUT ALSO DUCKED DEBATE BY SAYING THE POINT WAS NOT WHETHER THE MEANS WERE VIOLENT OR NON-VIOLENT BUT WHETHER THEY WERE EFFECTIVE.

7. CUBAN SPONTANEITY. PALME FOUND HIMSELF IN DEBATE WITH SWEDISH CORRESPONDENTS OVER SPONTANEITY OF CUBAN POPULAR ENTHUSIASM FOR HIS VISIT. HE TOLD REPORTERS HIS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH SITUATIONS LEFT HIM CONVINCED ENTHUSIASM WAS SPONTANEOUS AND SINCERE. EXPRESSEN CORRESPONDENT (BENGT APPLGREN) VENTURED TO DOUBT MANY IN CROWD KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT SWEDEN AND REPORTED TTHAT CUBAN CHILDREN THOUGHT HE (APPLEGREN) WAS RUSSIAN AND KEPT CALLING HIM "TOVARISH."
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